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ABSTRACT

Attitudes expressed in Iowa's news media recently show a change of attitude from an urban or metropolitan slant to a more pro-rural, pro-agrarian point of view. Iowa's major daily news medium is now saying that the state's character, culture, economy, values, beliefs, and social attitudes are in jeopardy, and Iowans should have the moral and futuristic obligation to concern themselves with the total decline facing the entire state: the decline of small farms; the decline of small communities; the decline of small schools; and the rapid and increasing outmigration of younger citizens. Solutions to the problems are hard to achieve. The concept of "wither and die" expressed in the media is accepted by people and becomes a directive not only of impending doom, but of inevitability. Even where optimism exists, the question remains, when does an institution's student enrollment become too small to carry an adequate education (curricular as well as extra-curricular)? Some small schools are meeting the challenge by sharing facilities and programs. Additional assistance could come in (1) passing legislation establishing a minimum number of attendance hours rather than attendance days, (2) training teachers for working in rural areas, and (3) promoting the agrarian lifestyle to rural students. (BRR)

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TO BE OR NOT TO BE: IT'S STILL A QUESTION OF ATTITUDE

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TO BE OR NOT TO BE: IT'S STILL A QUESTION OF ATTITUDE

A paper presented in Washington, D.C. on 3 May, 1982
at the National Rural Conference -
Sponsored by the United States Department of Education

The original Toward Community Growth study was published and distributed in 1979. One of the segments of the study dealt specifically with the attitudes (positive or negative) of rural Iowans and rural Americans. One major contention of "To Be or Not to Be..." was that these attitudes (or the lack thereof) were influenced by "mediums of news conveyance and editorialization." Unfortunately most of the 'mediums' available to rural citizens were 'urban' or 'city-based.' The attitudes concerning rural, therefore, were quite naturally slanted toward an urban or metropolitan readership, and away from the pro-rural, pro-agrarian point of view. This ascertion was not merely opinion; it was an observation based on fact and documented by newspapers, periodicals and authoritative research.

One paragraph in the 1979 edition of Toward Community Growth described and summarized the original intent and purpose of "To Be or Not to Be: It's a Question of Attitude:"

> In examining news articles of the past two years it is obvious that attitudes of varying degrees have been 'set' in the minds of interested and uninterested readers; rural and urban. This has been accomplished through several journalistic designs, of which the most obvious include: 1) The 'bad news' effect which could lead to a defeatist attitude; 2) the 'voice of authority' syndrome, (i.e., powerless to counter the statewide 'news'), which often results in a subservient attitude whenever public officials are quoted by a leading communicative medium; 3) the 'data-based' report, which outweighs an emotional attitude; and 4) the 'editorial,' which is only opinion, but nevertheless a powerful opinion since it appears in print and is sanctioned by the publisher. This list of journalistic designs is not all-inclusive. All, some, or none may be employed in a single writing. Negative attitudes concerning small schools are established in many 'major voice'

> reportings. 'Good News' concerning the work of small schools is virtually non-existent, and so, therefore, are the 'positive' attitudes concerning small schools and rural education.[1]

Now, in 1982 (three years and three volumes of Toward Community Growth later) there is some 'good news' concerning small schools, small communities and rural Iowa in general. Positive reporting and opinion-making should, in time, reverse (or at least offset) the 'bad news' effect, the 'voice of authority' syndrome, the 'data-based' report and the 'choice of words' editorial. The only foreseeable problem would be, has this reversal in "news conveyance" and "editorialization" come too little and too late; or can Iowa become (as the state motto explicitly proclaims) truely a "place to grow?" Only time will tell. But time is a precious commodity, and, (unfortunately) not renewable.

The January 3, 1982 Register stated, "Iowa's small towns have shaped the character and values of the state and its people. If fewer Iowans grow up in these towns, attend the small schools, and work beside their neighbors, then the state will be a different place,"[2] and, the January 10 Des Moines Register reported, in three very prolific words of a sub-heading, "Bigger...Not...Better."[3] On January 17 a Register editorial voiced the following opinion:

> Iowans can expect to feel cultural shocks from the disappearance of the vitality of so many small towns. The state's economy has been dependent largely on the produce of the soil, but its character has been stamped by small towns. The beliefs, values and taboos cultivated there - around the family table or in a Main Street cafe, at a church circle meeting or in a high-school class - have had a powerful influence on the political and social attitudes of the state's people.[4]

The January 3 Register carried a lead story which epitomized the "Lessons in Rural" and "To Be or Not to Be" heralded by the Toward Community Growth project:

"For five decades, a shadow of decline has darkened the places where Iowa grew up... Many of Iowa's small towns...have watched their Main Streets wither, their sons and daughters move away, their schools close, and their surrounding farms consolidate into bigger spreads with fewer families."[5]

In effect, then, Iowa's major daily medium of news conveyance is now saying that the State's character, culture, economy, values, beliefs and social attitudes are in jeopardy; and that Iowans should have the moral and futuristic obligation to concern themselves with the total decline facing the entire State: 1) The decline of small farms; 2) the decline of small communities; 3) the decline of small schools; and 4) the rapid and increasing outmigration of younger citizens. All four components are interrelated; all parts affect the whole. What, then, does one do about this problem: Continue to consolidate schools; small farms; continue the loss of small communities; continue to allow the outmigration of citizens and (more specifically) young people? Or does one take a stand and work 'toward community growth?' Let's briefly examine some very basic and some very simple facts. The January 17 Des Moines Register reported on a "tale of 5 towns and 1 school." The plot is familiar; it's the same old story concerning school mergers.

> Once upon a simpler time there were five little towns - Holly Springs, Hornick, Salix Sloan and Smithland - with five little schools. And everyone was very happy.
>
> The fairy tale ended in the early 1960s with the consolidation of the five schools and the beginning of the Westwood Community School District. Hardly anyone in these parts has lived happily every after.
>
> The Westwood fuss is not unlike other school squabbles..."[6]

And who's right, or who's wrong? According to the same article "it all depends on whose ox is getting gored or whose foot is getting stomped." The Register concluded with its implication that school mergers make "mortal enemies" of neighbors.

What about the continued consolidation of small family farms into large ones? If we give "a free rein to the economies of scale and capability of greater horsepower" the Register's investigative reporters maintain that Iowa's 120,000 farms will shrink to approximately 15,000 in 50 years. Where will this place the State population-wise, school-wise, and community-wise? The January 10 Register provided a futuristic look at the Hawkeye State in the year 2032. If the following "picture of the future seems incredible, think about the changes in Iowa's small towns and farms in the past 50 years."

> Look ahead, through 50 years of springtime planting and autumn harvest, and this is what you might find in Iowa's future:
>
> The corn and soybean fields stretch for miles. As far as the eye can see, there is not a farmstead in this sea of green and gold. Old farmyards have been plowed up, and huge tractors and combines roll across what once were country roads and the yards and streets of tiny Iowa villages.
>
> In the entire state, there are only 15,000 farms. In the early 1980s, there were eight times as many. The average spread now is 2,300 acres, not the 290 acres of 1981.
>
> As the experts feared, many of the smallest towns that existed in 1980 are gone, and the concern now is for the survival of some of the 99 county seats.
>
> Many towns that have survived are nothing more than rows of white clapboard houses. Other traditional signs of small-town prosperity - the schools, Main Street businesses, and jobs - have disappeared.
>
> Even in towns that are better off, the Main Streets of many are dying. The grain elevator still stands watch over the town, but the only bustling businesses are the farm supply store and the combination grocery store, cafe and tavern.
>
> Life in much of rural Iowa is empty. The farmers, their families, and the hired help are isolated. There are no neighbors for miles; there often is no town with a cafe close enough for a quick cup of coffee in the morning.[7]

Where have all the children gone? Sometime, for your own amazement, look at the faces on the class pictures of your own school's graduating seniors. What hap-

pened to them? Why did they leave? Were they told (or educated) to part the rolling seas of golden grain and make an exodus (as quickly as possible) away from the homes, schools and communities which nurtured them? Did they make the decision to leave all by themselves, independent of outside factors and influence? Were specific socio-economic conditions present? Farmer-writer Robert Karolevitz of Mission Hill, South Dakota commented in the January 10 Des Moines Register about the ironies involved in the withering-away of Midwestern small towns and the general loss of a rural population.

> As we decry the exodus of the young and the decline of our smaller communities, we seem to be making paradoxical moves as a nation. We abandon more and more railroad trackage; we centralize our Post Office facilities in larger cities in the name of efficiency; we consolidate our schools; we build interstate freeways to whisk travelers from one population center to another; we legislate against so-called small, inefficient hospitals, and we promote the expansion of the farm unit so fewer people are required to produce our food and fiber.[8]

And, according to Lauren Soth (agricultural journalist for the Des Moines Register) fewer people producing food and fiber have shown "no perceptible gain for consumers in lower food cost."[9] Who, then, gains from the consolidation of family farms into larger, supposedly more efficient units? Existing evidence clearly shows that the 'small' farming unit is losing ground as a viable economic force; the average consumer has shown "no perceptible gain" in purchasing power; and agrarian states are constantly facing an outmigration of young wage earners, young producers and young citizens of child-bearing age. If modern technology continues at its current pace, Iowa and other middle-western states may be faced with a bleak future. Soth summarized this assessment when he stated:

> ...the small farmers, both landowners and tenants, are at a disadvantage in buying the new inputs, getting credit and in selling their products. Moreover, the public extension and research agencies favor the larger and more prosperous farmer.

> This weighting of the benefits of technological progress, which further concentrates landholdings and increases the average size of farms, goes well beyond the economies of scale... It increases the disparity in income in rural areas.[10]

Two University of Illinois' researchers have found that "small farms are alive - but changing - in the Midwest." This change has been brought about by an "agricultural transformation" of the last three decades. Innovations in science and machinery (technology) "have enabled fewer farmers to work more land profitably. This trend has raised fears for the survival of the small farm."[11] These fears are not unwarranted, nor do they go unheeded. Victor K. Ray, Vice-President for Field Services of the National Farmers Union, has stated that in the next ten years another one million family farms will disappear, and that one-third of the farm population will disappear during the 1980s if current trends continue. "That possibility," Ray added, "has enormous implications for the inhabitants of towns and small cities throughout the nation."[12] A recent Kiplinger Report cited several of these implications which will directly affect the business of agriculture: "Thousands of farmers will be forced to sell out completely, or switch to a part-time operation and work full-time elsewhere. A lot of good families are going to be hurt."[13]

These attitudes are not unique to national agricultural leaders, national reports/newsletters, and national organizations. There is a genuine concern for the survival of the small farm, the small community and (hence) the small school. It is a grass-roots' concern from legitimate agrarianists and today's media no longer 'buries' this consternation with a time-worn apathy and attitudinal phrase of 'who-really-cares-but-we'll-print-it-anyway.' This was evidenced in a recent Des Moines Register guest editorial entitled "In these hard times, 'one farm dies that another may live.'" Steve Berntson, a Paullina, Iowa farmer and free lance writer, epitomized the feelings of many life-long rural constituents in the following editorial excerpt:

> The past stalks us, and everywhere we walk are the echos and reminders of men and women come and gone from these acres.
>
> The farm's been sold. A neighboring farmer, rich in land and acre-eating machinery, bought it, partly as a tax write-off. No doubt he will burn the buildings, bulldoze the grove, farm every last acre. One-hundred-sixty acres will be only another nice addition to his spread.
>
> The farm is a victim of strained economics. Consider this: Take 160 acres of Iowa's prime land, and buy it for the going price of $3,000 an acre. Plant it to corn, harvest 140 bushels per acre, and sell your crop for $2.50 a bushel. That comes to the tidy sum of $56,000. But the clincher is this - that $56,000 will not pay even the interest on the purchase price of the farm! What about production expenses? What about principal (sic) payments and land taxes? And what about making a living?
>
> The empty house and sagging barn paint a picture often-repeated throughout Iowa, and one abundant in irony.
>
> First, there is the obvious richness of the land itself. In stark and unmistakable contrast to the decay of all sorts of communities and institutions it supports. Whoever coined the term "dirt cheap" had a mistaken understanding of the true value of land. Whether we price it at $500 an acre or $5,000 an acre ultimately makes little difference. The fact is, like a great work of art, land is beyond dollars, a treasure beyond price. It is the ultimate resource. Of what worth are gold mines or oil wells or steel mills if there is not somewhere an abundance of black, fertile soil to feed a hungry world? And surrounded by a chunk of the world's best soil, Iowa's schools and churches and hospitals and towns - yes, whole towns - wither and die.[14]

"Wither and die." Not only is this the antithesis of the State's Motto, "Iowa - A Place to Grow," it is representative of the 'bad news' effect referred to earlier. Regardless of the 'good intentions' and implied sympathy/empathy expressed by the author, people are still conditioned by what they read and what they hear. "Wither and die" becomes a statement of cold, hard fact. It becomes a directive not only of impending doom, but of inevitability. "Voice of authority" in statewide communica-

tion mediums can still overshadow optimism; and the question still remains - when does an institution's student enrollment become too small to carry on an adequate education (curricular as well as extra-curricular)? When does "wither and die" become a 'mercy killing' and not an act of homicidal violence?

In the fall of 1981 the Des Moines Register ran a story on Iowa's smallest high school; Clearfield. Certain educational drawbacks were obviously present when only 31 students comprised the entire high school enrollment: "...a high school football player without a team, a would-be chemistry student without a class;"[15] a one-to-one student-teacher ratio in drama and advanced math courses. The Register's reporter added that the 31 Clearfield High School students weren't "complaining too loudly," however.

> Instead, they talk with great pride of the things that typify life in Iowa's rural high schools - such things as spirit, friendliness, and freedom from problems with vandalism and drugs.
>
> They talk, too, of their greatest fear: If the high school dies, the town of 430 might soon follow.[16]

State school officials at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in Des Moines were cited by the Register as not being "as happy with the Clearfield school as the students and townspeople"[17] were. One DPI official commented: "Clearfield's been over the hill a long time. I talked to them quite strongly about reorganization back in the early 1960s. But that's all water under the dam. Nobody wants to do it voluntarily. Some of these schools simply shouldn't be saved."[18] A second DPI official noted the following:

> When a school population drops below 120, educators have to ask themselves, 'Are there enough bodies here to run a varied program?' A school like Clearfield is badly pinched. They're struggling for survival more than any-

> thing else. They're down to offering the bare minimum.
>
> They are short-changed when it comes to specialized courses such as vocational home economics that not only deal with homemaking, but with the food industry; or with courses like advanced computer programming.
>
> I would feel uncomfortable with my children in a setting that small.[19]

A 1973 Clearfield graduate expressed a similar (and surprising) sentiment. In addition to favoring reorganization with a nearby district, he also added that a "big school would offer more. It's true that the school more or less keeps the town going, but there's a point where you have to stop and think of the kids."[20]

The problem, however, is fast becoming...'what kids?' Where has Iowa's population gone over the years? Is the so-called 'outmigration' trend irreversible? Will there continue to be a decrease in the birth rate? It is assumed that the larger, corporate-style farms are here to stay, and that the traditional 'family farms' are on the way out, but according to several sources (including the U.S. Census Bureau and the Population Reference Bureau) the total U.S. population "will increase about 10% by 1990."[21] A special Kiplinger Report (released in the fall of 1981) stated that the United States' population will increase from 228 million to 249 million by the beginning of the next decade. Assuming no change in the current birthrate, approximately four million babies will be born in 1990 as compared to 3.6 million in 1980. Kiplinger continued by stating that there will be more women of child-bearing age ten years from now, and that's an "echo of the baby boom."[22] In applying the projected population trends to school enrollments, grade school numbers will continue to decrease until 1984, but then increase as the "baby boom" children reach school age. Similarly, high school enrollments will decline through the 1980s, but rise in the 1990s.[23]

In a 1982 American School Board Journal article entitled "Population experts say a surprise package might soon arrive at your schools," a "bumper crop" of babies is on the way and "optimism" should be the order of the decade.

> ...they are already beginning to be born. Ever conservative, the U.S. Census Bureau prefers to call it - demurely - a "slight increase in the number of births." Others are willing to call a baby a baby and name the phenomenon a bonafide boomlet.
> ...Something unusual happened in 1978: The birth rate began to edge up. Just by a whisper, mind you, but up nevertheless, and it continued to go up modestly - amounting to a 5 percent climb between 1978 and the present. And something else occurred: The number of births started to go up - up to a squalling 3.6 million in 1980 from a record low of 3.1 million just seven years before.[24]

The Journal continued by stating that this statistical information adds up to one thing, "...a baby boomlet...that will produce as many as 4 million babies a year - almost as many as were born in the peak year of the postwar baby boom."[25] Unfortunately (and this must be stressed) "people will continue to move out of the cities and rural areas, and into the suburban areas."[26] The Northeast and North will keep losing their citizens, the West will claim many of the migrants, and the South will gain in population.[27]

Educational Research Service, Inc. (ERS) has taken population data projections from the U.S. Census Bureau in order to provide an indication of future school enrollments. These projections helped provide a futuristic "head count" of children as well as the school-age population toward the end of the Twentieth Century.

> - The number of grammar school children, ages five to nine, will bottom out in 1982 at 15.4 million, then peak at 19.7 million in 1994.
> - Overall, the population of children ages 5 to 17 will hit its lowest point of 43.4 million in 1984, then rise to reach its highest

point of 51.1 million in 2000.
- The population of junior high students, ages 10 to 13, will hit its highest point of 16.1 million in 2000 after reaching its lowest level of 12.6 million in 1986.
- The number of high school students, ages 14 to 17, will reach its lowest point in 1990 at 12.8 million, then catch up to junior high students with nearly 16 million in the year 2000.[28]

What, then, is the bottom-line for agricultural states like Iowa? Do the previously cited and documented population trends have any future effect on the Hawkeye State's children of school age? What if the 'outmigration' to warmer climates continues to occur? What if the farms become increasingly larger; if the once-proud (and family-filled) farm homesteads are continually torn down and leveled in order to grow a few bushels more of grain? What if the small communities disappear completely, including the few businesses now left on deserted main streets? What if employment opportunities for young families are no longer available? What if the ever-present, ever-threatening energy crunch forces a rural movement toward more heavily populated areas where businesses still have a chance for survival? What if...?

The possibilities and 'what ifs' are endless. Conjecture could go on forever but it would be pointless. It is 'here' and 'now' that we must prepare for the future, and there are encouraging signs for the survival of the small, rural school and the rural community. It must be noted, however, that these 'signs' do not advocate an obedience to 'sitting on the status quo;' or relying on the way things are (or will be) without some concerned and progressive intervention.

Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of the Department of Public Instruction's efforts to help in the survival of all schools has been the 'sharing of programs' concept. This innovative, progressive method of educational adaptation would enable primarily small, rural schools to share both teachers and extra-curricular programs.

There would then be no reason for a financially pinched school (or any K-12 institution with a declining enrollment) to give up academic programs through staff reduction or to forfeit extra-curricular activities due to a lack of students. Two (or more?) schools could participate in this 'sharing' or 'pooling' of resources but still retain their independence, this autonomy, and their own kindergarten through twelfth grade school systems.

In a guest opinion printed by the Des Moines Register Leroy Powell (Principal of the Corwith-Wesley, Iowa High School) stated his desire for the Department of Public Instruction to allow school districts the freedom to make their own choices on the 'sharing' concept.

> ...If the taxpayers wish to share football, let them do so. If they wish to keep basketball separate, let them do so. If they make mistakes in these decisions, let the mistakes come from the people who are involved directly.
>
> It is easy for people in Des Moines, Davenport, or other large cities to say "reorganize or dissolve."
>
> But these are very tough issues for people in small communities with the fierce pride they feel about their towns and their schools.
>
> We see sharing as a step that could lead in one of several directions.
>
> Our concern is that we be allowed to make those chices in our own communities.[29]

The Corwith-Wesley and LuVerne Districts are currently in the second year of a 'sharing' program. Both schools send their seventh, eighth and ninth graders to LuVerne, while the three upper grades attend classes at Corwith. The extra-curricular activities of band and vocal music are shared by both districts in the Corwith building, but each 'group' returns to their home community for athletic programs.

"This sharing has allowed students to receive educational offerings that would not have been possible if the districts operated independently."[30]

Two additional Iowa school systems have recently explored the concept of program sharing. Both the Wall Lake and Lake View-Auburn Boards of Education agreed to explore the academic and financial benefits that could possibly accrue by combining their junior high and high school classes. Both boards have also asked the Department of Public Instruction to evaluate the facilities in both districts. Members of the respective boards have indicated that "some people might see this proposal as a move toward consolidation of the two districts. But they said their concern is to maintain separate systems while trying to alleviate some of their funding problems."[31]

A second interesting 'here' and 'now' opportunity might rest in the successful passage of a legislative bill which would enable schools to establish a minimum number of attendance hours rather than attendance days. Currently Iowa law prescribes 180 school attendance days, but a move has been underway to change this mandate to the choice of 180 days or 1080 hours. This would allow school districts to become more flexible in the scheduling of school attendance days, and possibly serve as a valuable factor in the saving, or reallocation of general fund dollars. If school weeks were allowed to be shortened to four days and the number of daily teacher-student contact hours was increased it is conceivable that considerable cost savings could be accomplished. A four-day school week (as opposed to the traditional five) could save 20 percent

on transportation costs alone. This would not be a small cost factor in rural, sparsely populated areas. A four-day school week could possibly permit the reduction of heating and cooling costs by having a 'three-day-off' period rather than the traditional two-day weekend. Another distinct advantage of the 1,080 hour school year (and one that northern climates could utilize) would be the opportunity of 'suspending' school during the coldest period of the year, 'draining the pipes,' and locking up the building. The time could be made up through lengthening the school year by adding days, or adding hours. Other advantages are possible, but the full benefits realized by individual school districts would be left up to local innovation and creativity.

The ERIC Clearing House on Rural Education and Small Schools distributed a "fact sheet" in the fall of 1981 explaining the necessity for training potential teachers of rural students. This would constitute a third 'here' and 'now' function which could be accomplished through the unilateral cooperation of a rural state's colleges and universities. The "Fact Sheet" documented this assertion with the following paragraph:

> One of the current emphases of preservice programs is that of exposing education majors to the reality of teaching and living in rural communities, so they will have a better perception of the demands and rewards of rural teaching and thus be less likely to be unhappy with the actuality after they begin to practice. It is hoped that this will reduce the rapid teacher turnover which has been a perennial problem in rural areas and will produce teachers who are more content with life and work in rural communities.[32]

A fourth method of preparing for the future with a solid and grow-

ing rural economy and rural population would be to promote an agrarian lifestyle while our students (our children) are still in school. This has been practiced with the Toward Community Growth study in several midwestern schools and communities. Only time will tell if a concentrated effort of rural studies (with rural students) actually works. Thus far the accumulated and assimilated data has shown that positive attitudes toward 'rural' as a way of life are being produced in rural students.

Additional rural academic activities have been produced. An example of this 'production' was published in the May, 1981 issue of Instructor magazine. According to Dorothy Zjawin and Marlow Ediger "you won't have any trouble keeping your kids 'down on the farm' after they've seen this list of activities that relate to science, math, and social studies."[33] See Appendix ___.

Perhaps the best summary for "To Be or Not to Be: It's Still a Question of Attitude" came from a rural Iowa student. In a Des Moines Register editorial entitled " Small Schools," Jill Muilenburg of Primghar, Iowa stated the following opinion. In effect, in essence, and with empathy...this writer concurs.

> As a student in a small northwest Iowa high school, I think it's a privilege to be able to attend a school where students and teachers have close relationships. I think these relationships are more common in small schools than in large schools.
>
> I believe they are important. This way, bonds are formed that can be held onto for a lifetime and can never be taken away from students or teachers...
>
> Some schools are now facing the possibility of having to consolidate.

Although consolidation may benefit the schools economically, I think it hurts the students and teachers personally. The students might gain new ways of learning and new friends, but they may lose trust in teachers and their bonds may be broken.

Some teachers are usually lost in the event of consolidation and when this happens, students may find themselves "lost" as well.

I'm sure there are situations where consolidation is the only answer. But if there is the possibility of being able to avoid it, I think it should be avoided.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Roger A. Baskerville, Toward Community Growth: A Career Education Model for Iowa and Other Predominantly Rural States, (Fort Dodge, Ia.: Arrowhead Area Education Agency Learning Resource Center, 1979), p. 8.

[2]Randy Evans, "Will Fertile wilt? Cylinder sputter? Gravity fall?," Des Moines Sunday Register, Jan. 3, 1982, p. 4A.

[3]Randy Evans, "Will big-farm future plow up small town?," Des Moines Sunday Register, Jan. 10,1982, p. 6A.

[4]"Future for small towns," Des Moines Sunday Register, Jan. 17, 1982, p. 1C.

[5]op. cit., Evans, "Will Fertile wilt? Cylinder sputter? Gravity fall?," p. 1A.

[6]Willis David Hoover, "A tale of 5 towns and 1 school," Des Moines Sunday Register, Jan. 17, 1982, p. 1B.

[7]op. cit., Evans, "Will big-farm future plow up small town?," p. 1A.

[8]"ibid.," p. 6A.

[9]Lauren Soth, "It's time to listen to rural sociologists," Des Moines Register, Sept. 21, 1981, p. 8A.

[10]"ibid."

[11]"Study: Today's Small Farms Offer the Best of Two Worlds," Rural Development News, ed. Brian R. Holding, Vol. 6, No. 9, (Ames, Ia.: North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, April, 1982), p. 1.

[12]"Rural America Rapidly Receding," Iowa Farmers Union News, Vol 3, No. 3, (Des Moines, Ia.: March-April, 1981), p. 3.

[13]"Kiplinger Agricultural Letter," (Wash., D.C.: Spring, 1982), p. 1.

[14]Steve Berntson, "In these hard times, 'one farm dies that another may live," Des Moines Register, Feb. 26, 1982, p. 1A.

[15]Sherry Ricchiardi, "Clearfield High struggles to stay alive," Des Moines Register, Oct. 11, 1981, p. 1A.

[16] "ibid."

[17] "ibid."

[18] "ibid.," p. 3A.

[19] "ibid.:

[20] "ibid.:

[21] "Update on the '80s," A Special Kiplinger Report, (Wash., D.C.: 1981), p. 1.

[22] "ibid."

[23] "ibid.," p. 2.

[24] Bernadette Doran, "Population experts say a surprise package might soon arrive at your schools," American School Board Journal, Feb., 1982, p. 19.

[25] "ibid."

[26] "ibid.," p. 24.

[27] "ibid."

[28] "ibid."

[29] Leroy Powell, "Sharing high school programs," Des Moines Sunday Register, Oct. 11, 1981, the Sports Section.

[30] "ibid."

[31] Mary Post, "LV-A, Wall Lake School districts study shared classes," Carroll Daily Times Herald, (Carroll, Ia.: Dec. 17, 1981), p. 1.

[32] "Rural Education," ed. Margaret A. Hoyt, (Las Cruces, N.M.: ERIC/ RESS, Oct. 1981), p. 1.

[33] Dorothy Zjawin and Marlowe Ediger, "A bumper crop of farm activities," Instructor, May, 1981, p. 41.

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